

NSC BRIEFING

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11 August 1954

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

- I. Long-standing ferment increased in Morocco past fortnight; almost died down in Tunisia.
  - A. French made surprise concession Tunisia 31 July.
  - B. Mendes-France, in trip to Tunis, proffered threefold terms: internal autonomy for Tunisia, military and diplomatic union (revision protectorate treaties), guarantee French interests.
  - C. New Tunisian cabinet contains 4 prominent moderate nationalists (2 of them to negotiate with French).
  - D. However, French settlers continue strongly oppose "concessions."
- II. Currently, Morocco seeing upsurge violence.
  - A. "Month of vengeance," commemorating dethronement Sultan last August, has already meant over 70 dead, 250 injured.

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- B. Riots concentrated three areas: Fez--religious center; Petitjean--industrial area, near US Air Force base, Sidi Slimane; Port Lyautey--site of US naval air base.
- C. Incidents, riots of past week tied religious holidays--on eve of which, last year, former Sultan deposed. Disorders may reach peak 20 August, calender anniversary of dethronement.
- D. Mendes-France stated in National Assembly (10 August) present main objective Morocco is restore order, seek settlement with present Sultan.
  - 1. This sharp contrast to Tunisian concessions.

III. Short-term Prospects:

- A. In absence more substantial French policy change, agitation and sporadic disorders likely to continue.

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- B. Formerly pro-French Moroccans will become increasingly disillusioned.
1. One group being further alienated by French "do-nothing" policy, particularly in contrast Tunisia.
  2. Second group, exemplified by Berber chieftain El Glaoui, equally disillusioned by French failure take stronger repressive stand.
- C. Settlers, worried by possibility of French concessions, will increase pressure on Assembly.

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